

GODSMACK

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According to Greek mythology, the phoenix absorbs new life through rising from the ashes of its predecessor.

By the same token, we tear down the relics of the past in order to make way for the innovations of the future. As every rebirth requires reinvention, GODSMACK—Sully Erna [vocals, guitar], Tony Rombola [guitar], Robbie Merrill [bass], and Shannon Larkin [drums]—continue a similar cycle on their seventh full-length and debut for BMG, *When Legends Rise*.

The multiplatinum four-time GRAMMY® Award-nominated Boston bastion of hard rock raises its voice louder than ever on their first album in four years.

“You’ve got to burn it down to build it up,” affirms Erna. “When Legends Rise is a metaphor. Life can get challenging at times. It can knock you onto the ground. However, if you reach inside of yourself, find that inner strength, and rise up again, you’ll flourish. Over the past few years, I went through a really tough time, but I learned this firsthand. Coming out on the other side, we’re going to do this bigger and better than we ever have. We’re ready to work.”

Truth is, the members of GODSMACK have never been afraid to put in the work...

Like the city they call home, these musicians speak louder, fight harder, and grow stronger each day. Through an uncompromising attitude and uncanny knack for a hummable hook, they quietly became one of modern rock’s most reliable and resonant institutions. Against all odds, the boys have broken one ceiling after another. They’ve landed seven number one singles on both the Billboard Mainstream & Active Rock charts. Most notably, they’ve earned 23 Top 10 hits at Active Rock—the most of any act since February 1999. Joining a prestigious club that includes Van Halen, U2, Metallica, Dave Matthews Band, and Linkin Park, they debuted at #1 on the Billboard Top 200 three consecutive times. Not to mention, they’ve sold over 20 million albums worldwide, garnered four GRAMMY® nods, and won “Rock Artist of the Year” at the Billboard Music Awards.

Following a marathon two-year tour cycle reunderlining their position as one of rock’s most explosive acts, Sully made a conscious decision to approach the writing similar to how he spent his time creating for his solo work by bringing in some outside writers and exploring some newer modern sounds. As a result, the sonic palette expanded dramatically, while preserving the edge and integrity that GODSMACK has historically built their career on.

“I really wanted to open up this vein and reach for something fresh,” admits Erna. “Working together with guys like John Feldman and Clint Lowery really got me thinking outside the box melodically when they presented me with some musical ideas that I would have never thought of. A little push opened the floodgates. Personally and professionally, I’ve matured in so many different ways. So it was time for that kind of expansion.”

Erna also invited Erik Ron after two strong writing sessions into the GODSMACK Headquarters in New England to co-produce the 11 songs with him comprising *When Legends Rise*. Together, they unlocked an epic urgency evidenced within the title track and album opener.

A massive drum march and high-energy riffing give way to an empowering chant, “When ashes fall, The legends rise.”

“Our first single “Bulletproof” was merely a reflection of a transitional period I went through back in 2016 when I decided to flush out everything and everyone in my life that was negative and emotionally draining me. At some point you have to start taking responsibility for yourself and stop pointing the finger in the other direction. We can only be responsible for ourselves, not for how others behave. Most of the people we surround ourselves with are OUR choices, and as much as loyalty is extremely important to me, it doesn’t mean I will carry your crosses forever either. Once you’ve been hurt or betrayed so many times, you eventually build a wall that protects you from all the drama; basically making you bullet proof!

Once you build yourself back up in this way, and surround yourself with all the right people and things, that’s when the magic happens.”

The magic carries through the first single “Bulletproof.” Hinging on a massive and muscular groove, Erna’s voice takes hold during hypnotic verses before snapping into a stadium-size chant that’s impossible to shake.

A wah-wah cry bleeds into the album’s most seismic and show-stopping refrain during “Unforgettable.” Everything culminates on a choir of local middle schoolers conducted by Erna—like his own “Another Brick in the Wall.”

“When I heard the melody in my head, it felt like a big singalong or like The Patriots could hopefully run out onto the field to it,” he laughs. “I’ve been working with this organization called C.A.T.S. —Community Alliance for Teen Safety—since like 2003. They put me in touch with this amazing group of twenty kids. They came to the studio, we got a bunch of pizza, and they sang it brilliantly. It’s really exciting.”

Elsewhere, piano and strings drive the heartfelt “Under Your Scars” as “Every Part of Me” trudges forward on ironclad intensity. Spurred by a jam session with Lowery, “Eye of the Storm” closes out this journey with a barrage of distortion, haunting vocals, a hypnotic solo, and the sound of roaring thunder.

“If you listen to this as a body of work, it ends with the sound of something to come,” grins Erna. “Who knows? It might just be another beginning for us.”

Regardless of what’s on the horizon, GODSMACK rise like never before here.

“When you listen to this album, just have some fun with it,” he leaves off. “That’s what music should do at the end of the day. There’s no doubt about it, this is a rock record through and through. This is also a Godsmack record.”

Vocals, Guitar — Sully Erna
Bass — Robbie Merrill
Lead Guitar — Tony Rombola
Drums — Shannon Larkin